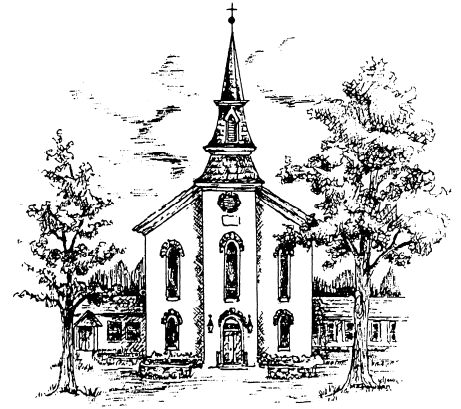


**Wentz's United Church of
Christ**

3246 Skippack Pike, Post Office Box 96
Worcester, Pennsylvania 19490
610-584-4855
Office@wentzucc.org



August 1, 2005

“People were bringing even infants (to Jesus). and when the disciples saw it they sternly ordered them not to do it. But Jesus called the children to come to him and said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a child will never enter it.’ (Luke 18: 15-17)

Dear Children/Youth Ministry Applicant,

One of the great joys of being a part of a faith community is learning from children and youth about what it means to be a child of God, no matter what the age. They give adults the precious gifts of innocence, enthusiasm, curiosity and are visible signs that God is not yet through with Creation.

They give so much to us. So as adults we are asked to give to them. Attached to this letter is the new Application/Screening Form for the Children/Youth Ministry Applicant here at Wentz’s United Church of Christ. Carefully created by the Safety Task Force Committee, it represents our Congregation’s firm commitment to give children and youth the chance to spiritually learn and grow in the safest and most secure environment we can provide.

The call to work with children and youth carries with it great responsibilities. We are all too aware of incidents of sexual abuse or inappropriate behavior within congregations and other organizations, where the safety of children and youth have been threatened, and the sacred trust between adults and young people broken.

Therefore, with God as our guide, the Congregation commits to a more organized and thorough process of volunteer/staff recruitment through the use of new guidelines, this new application/screening form as our vehicle and Christ's call as our scriptural foundation. Let "the bottom line" be crystal clear, we want to ensure that children and youth can "come to Christ" at Wentz's United Church of Christ and be safe, honored, loved, and respected. As well, we want parents to have full confidence in the adults that care for their children.

We are aware that such a Form asks for your extra commitment and the sharing of personal information by you. Please be assured that all the information provided will be kept in strict confidentiality, and will be seen by only the Pastoral staff.

As you commit to taking this added step in ministering to our young people, know that the Congregation commits to keeping this process humane and sensitive.

"Let the children come to me and do not stop them." This is Christ's command and challenge to us to make our Congregation home safe, secure and nurturing. In this spirit, thank you in advance for being a partner in ministry with our children and youth

Sincerely,

Wentz United Church of Christ

Wentz United Church of Christ
Children/Youth Ministry Application

Name

Last	First	Middle
------	-------	--------

Address

Street

City	State	Zip Code
------	-------	----------

Daytime Phone _____

Evening Phone

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Have you worked in Children/Youth Ministry previously? Yes No

If yes please describe your experience in Children/Youth Ministry:

I have never been found guilty, or pled guilty or no contest, to a criminal charge.

True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation of the charge. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the charge; where the charge was filed; and the precise disposition of the charge.)

No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, misconduct, physical abuse, child abuse, or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired. True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation of the lawsuit. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)

I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position nor had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discriminations, harassment, exploitation, misconduct, physical abuse, child abuse or financial misconduct. True Not True

If not true, give a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination, name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)

Do you have a valid driver's license? True Not True

State where driver's license issued _____ Driver's license number _____

With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.

True Not True

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying? Yes No

If yes, please provide a brief explanation

The covenants between persons seeking employment or sanctioned volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection for consideration of, or termination of, the position I am seeking

to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given, or though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing a healthy covenant between employees or volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize Wentz's United Church of Christ and/or their agent to make inquires regarding all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquires concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background and character. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements made in good faith and without malice.

I agree to be bound by the Policies and Code of Behavior of Wentz's United Church of Christ. I shall refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church. I covenant with Children/Youth Ministry Staff which works with children and youth programs work in the church:

- To honor each child's integrity and worth as a child of God
- To provide a nurturing and safe environment for children and youth to grow socially, and spiritually.
- To continue to grow and nurture my own personal faith.
- To work in partnership with the professional staff, volunteers, and Christ as a part of the larger Christian community

Signature

Printed Name

Date

PENNSYLVANIA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY CLEARANCE

COMPLETE SECTION I ONLY. PRINT CLEARLY IN INK. ENCLOSE \$10.00 MONEY ORDER ONLY. PAYABLE TO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE. DO NOT SEND CASH OR PERSONAL CHECK.

SEND TO CHILDLINE AND ABUSE REGISTRY, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE, P.O. BOX 8170 HARRISBURG, PA 17105-8170

APPLICATIONS THAT ARE INCOMPLETE ILLEGIBLE OR RECEIVED WITHOUT FEE WILL BE RETURNED UNPROCESSED. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS CALL 717-783-6211

CHILDLINE USE ONLY

DATE RECEIVED BY CHILDLINE

SECTION I APPLICANT IDENTIFICATION

IN THIS SPACE PRINT APPLICANTS FULL NAME AND ADDRESS (DO NOT USE INITIALS)

NAME

STREET

CITY, STATE
ZIP CODE

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER		
AGE	DATE OF BIRTH	DAYTIME PHONE NO.
SEX <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F		COUNTY YOU LIVE IN

PREVIOUS NAMES USED SINCE 1975 (Include Maiden Name, Nicknames, Aliases)

(FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST)

(FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST)

PURPOSE OF CLEARANCE (Check ONE block ONLY)

<input type="checkbox"/> CHILD CARE	<input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTEERS-A copy of your PROCESSED 'Request for Criminal Record' (Form SP4-164) must be attached. Out-of-state residents must also attach a copy of their PROCESSED FBI clearance (Form FID-258).	<input type="checkbox"/> CWEP (Community Work Experience Program Participant)
<input type="checkbox"/> FOSTER CARE		
<input type="checkbox"/> ADOPTION		
<input type="checkbox"/> SCHOOL		

SIGNATURE OF CAO REP _____ CAO PHONE NO _____

PREVIOUS ADDRESSES SINCE 1975 (Attach additional pages if necessary)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (List everyone who lived with you at anytime since 1975 to the present).

NAME (First, Middle, Last) Do not use initials.	RELATIONSHIP	PRESENT AGE	SEX
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

I certify that the above information is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief and submitted as true and correct under penalty of law (Section 4904 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code).

Applicants are required to show the Administrator the original document. Administrators are required to keep a copy of this child abuse history record on file. Any person altering the contents of this document may be subject to civil, criminal or administrative action.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SECTION - CHILDLINE USE ONLY

SECTION II RESULTS OF HISTORY CHECK

APPLICANT IS **NOT** LISTED IN A REPORT OF CHILD ABUSE OR A REPORT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEE. APPLICANT **IS** LISTED IN A REPORT OF CHILD ABUSE OR A REPORT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEE (SEE BELOW).

STATUS OF REPORT	DATE OF INCIDENT	STATUS OF REPORT	DATE OF INCIDENT
1.		3.	
2.		4.	

VERIFIER _____

DATE _____

VERIFIER'S SUPERVISOR _____

DATE _____

SECTION III

VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES

_____ has requested a certification which includes a clearance of his/her name against the child abuse, school employee, and criminal history reports.

The results of the child abuse and school employee report clearances are listed in Section II on the reverse side. The results of the criminal history reports are listed below. Out-of-state residents must have criminal history clearance from both the Pennsylvania State Police and the FBI. The voluntary certification may be obtained every two years.

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to review this information to determine the suitability of the applicant as a substitute caregiver.

PENNSYLVANIA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY CLEARANCE

- Applicant is named as the perpetrator of a "Founded" child abuse or school employee report which occurred in the last five years.
- Applicant is named as the perpetrator of a "Founded" child abuse or school employee report which occurred over five years ago.
- Applicant is named as the perpetrator of an "Indicated" child abuse or school employee report.
- Applicant is not named as the perpetrator of any child abuse or school employee report contained in the Statewide Central Register.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE CLEARANCE

- Record exists and contains convictions which prohibit hire in a child care position. Report attached.
- Record exists, but convictions do not prohibit hire in a child care position. Report attached.
- Record exists, but no convictions are shown. This does not prohibit hire in a child care position. Report attached.
- No record exists. Report attached.

FBI CLEARANCE

- Record exists and contains convictions which prohibit hire in a child care position. Report attached.
- Record exists, but convictions do not prohibit hire in a child care position. Report attached.
- Record exists, but no convictions are shown. This may not prohibit hire in a child care position. Report attached.
- No record exists. Report attached.
- No FBI clearance required.

VERIFIER_____
DATE_____
VERIFIER'S SUPERVISOR_____
DATE

Code of Behavior Children/Youth Ministry Staff

Volunteers who have taken active part in the life of the congregation for at least **Six Months** may be invited to become involved with Educational and Youth Programs at various levels of commitment. During this time, those planning to be directly involved in the life of the congregation shall receive training and accept the intentions provided by the following code of behavior.

- **The Two Adult Rules:** The children and youth in both the Educational and Youth Fellowship Program of our congregation shall be under the care of supervision of two adults, one of whom may be a high school aide. An exception would exist in the education department if classes are so constructed as to provide constant visual access and frequent observation by the department's director, superintendent, or their designee. Furthermore, no teacher, advisor, aide of anyone else working with our children or youth should place themselves in a compromising situation by being alone with a child or with children out-of-sight of other teachers, advisors, aides, or parents. Finally, no teacher, advisor, or aide shall be **alone** with a child in the bathroom.
- **Specific Guidelines for Adult Supervision:** Adult leaders for a youth ministry activity, function as representatives of the church, and as such are held to different standards than when acting as a parent or adult in their own family. The rules and guidelines of the church must be followed by all leaders at all events, thereby providing appropriate supervision for the youth. Illegalities and irresponsibility cannot be allowed. Supervision must be consistent, reasonable and prudent.

Adults are encouraged to remember that they will be providing both supervision and models of adult Christian behavior for the youth in their care, and should endeavor to see that the example they set is consistent with the value and expectation of the church community.

- **Five Year Separation Rule:** When utilizing high school and young adults in the Educational Department, Youth Programs and Off-sight Activities there shall be a five year separation between these young persons and those they supervise. Every attempt will be made first to use youth who have reached the age of 18 as workers with children/youth.
- **Parental Consent:** Those working with children and youth shall have signed, written consent of a parent or guardian before attending, chaperoning or supervising activities or programs away from our facilities.
- **Discipline:** The purpose of discipline with children and youth is to maintain order in a manner consistent with the teaching of religious responsibility, respect and cooperation. No child shall be disciplined by the use of spanking, hitting, slapping, or any form of physical punishment. Verbal reprimands shall not include destructive criticism, insult or shouting. Teachers, advisors, aides and others helping in the classroom are encouraged to listen to the child, communicate expectations of appropriate behavior, use time-outs or give alternate choices.
- **Overnight Rule:** Any and all adult chaperones supervising overnight stays at our facilities or on congregational sponsored trips shall have been cleared to do so by the Pastoral Staff or other designated official. At least, two adult males will dorm with boys and two adult females with girls. Further, a signed written consent form is required which lists the names of advisors to be present. Last minute substitute or additional advisors are permissible as long as parental permission of child/youth participants is secured (either signed or witnessed phone contact).
- **Youth Group Activities:** Physical contact such as wrestling, horseplay or other high contact games are not appropriate recreational activity. No adult leader, Staff or Volunteer, should initiate or encourage physical or intimate contact with children or youth. Setting boundaries is the responsibility of the adults. The Youth Group is a group ministry. All participants are expected to remain with the group throughout the times listed in congregation publications. No pairing or otherwise separating off from the group to other parts of the building or grounds is permitted.

- **Leaving and Locking:** The last three people, including the staff person locking the door, will leave our facilities together. We avoid situations where one adult and one youth or child are left at the facility's door waiting to be picked up by parents at the end of an evening's activity. **"Parents are encouraged to respect concluding times."**
- **Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol:** The use of any drugs, tobacco or alcoholic products **at congregation facilities** at congregation sponsored youth events is not permitted.
- **Transportation:** Staff and adult leaders or teachers cannot transport children or youth between congregation facility and home except with written permission. Transportation for field trips, or to church activities and events will be by groups to and from the congregation facility. All approved vehicles will travel as a caravan and will be supplied with a listing of each person occupying each vehicle. Cell phones will be in each vehicle along with cell phone numbers for communication. Any member of the youth group cannot be permitted to be a designated driver for any youth group events.
- **Parental Guidelines:** We strongly encourage parents, when on the premises with their children, to know at all times where their children are, who they are with, and what they are doing. It is strongly encouraged that children 10 or under do not play in unsupervised areas.
- **Visitors On-site:** The staff volunteer or member of the congregation shall be aware of who is visiting our facilities. Visitors are welcomed and shall be accompanied on their visit to the areas frequented by our youth and children by a member of our congregation.
- **Reporting Responsibilities:** Any inappropriate conduct or relationship between an adult worker and a child or youth or any suspected violation of this code shall be promptly reported according to this policies reporting procedures.

➤ **Medical Release Form –**

At the beginning of each program year, parents/guardians of Youth Group members will be asked to complete a Medical Release Form (Appendix A). A copy of the completed forms will remain on file in the church offices; the originals will travel with the Youth Group anytime they leave the church premises.

➤ **Youth Group Covenant –**

At the beginning of each program year, all members of the Youth Group members and their parents/guardians will be asked to sign the Youth Group Covenant (Appendix B). These forms will remain on file in the church office.

➤ **Off Premises Events –**

Trip Permission Slips (Appendix C) must be signed by a parent/guardian and must accompany the Youth Group along with copies of the Medical Release Form on all off-premises events or activities.